Construction of new school building backed by MP launched in Vanuatu

Vanuatu Efate International School is an initiative of Efate MP Jessy Luo and a private partner. Hilaire Bule

The building of an international school at Erakor Half Road on Efate in Port Vila was launched recently by Prime Minister Charlot Salwai.

The school will be known as Vanuatu Efate International School is an initiative of Efate MP Jessy Luo and a private partner.

It is expected to open its doors next year to accommodate both local and foreign students.

The prime minister said while there are many more schools in Vanuatu than before independence, literacy levels are still very low compared with neighbouring countries.

He said when he held the education portfolio and introduced the free tuition mechanism it was to enable all children to go to school.

"Education is not a luxury for the people in Vanuatu but it is a service," he said.

Education Minister Joshua Pikioune said the education of a child is an important resource for the country.

"We give a value added to a child when we sent him or her to school," he said.

He said Vanuatu currently has about 200 students in China and they have to spend two years just to learn the Chinese language, so a school such as Vanuatu Efate International School could provide the opportunity for students to learn Chinese before going on to further studies.

The MP for Malekula, Antole Hymack, said Erakor Half Road needs a school to meet the growing population demand.

Luo said education is the foundation of the economic development of Vanuatu and that is the main reason is behind the project.

The Efate MP said the school is a milestone for Efate and Vanuatu and he hopes that the country will benefit from the initiative.

He appealed to the leaders of Vanuatu and specially the politicians to forecast more on the education of the children.

"The school will be the bridge in education between the other countries and this my plan and I want to give hope to the children of Vanuatu.

Everybody wants to make business but who is looking after the education.

We must create and provide the foundation of the economy of Vanuatu which is the education of our children," said MP Luo.

He paid tribute to his wife Late Wendy Himford to the realisation of the school.

Construction of the classrooms is expected to be completed before July 2024

Solomon Islands new school building

Meanwhile, Solomon Islands Baegu Asifola Senior High School has opened its new $4 million school building.

It is funded by the Solomon Islands government, with about $500,000 donated by China.

The project took three and a half years to complete and is made up of 12 classrooms including an administration office and two ablution blocks.

Deputy Secretary of Corporate Constance Wane, who spoke on behalf of the Ministry of Rural Development, said the ministry is confident that better facilities encourage better school attendance, which is good for students.

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